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CONVERSATION

In the Spirit of Kitchen Tables: A Conversation on Citation and Politics

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This piece unfolds as a multi-voiced dialogue among members of a co-lab who work as scholars, artists, dancers, professors, and storytellers and span diverse disciplinary homes including sustainability, art, science and technology studies, and life sciences. We position citation as a practice of community accountability, aesthetic expression, resistance to erasure, and care for knowledge lineages. We ask: Who are we accountable to when we cite? What does it mean to be in right relationship with our sources? How do citations enact care, reciprocity, and community? In our discussion of disciplinary and epistemological borders, we challenge academic conventions around what counts as knowledge and who counts as a knower, especially highlighting the need to cite Indigenous scholars not only when writing *about* Indigenous knowledge, but in honoring contemporary, place-based intellectual contributions. In our discussion on canon, we interrogate academic genealogies, metrics of influence, and the mechanisms by which expertise is legitimized. We propose alternate genealogies—such as "mother texts" and "grandmother texts"—and dream of visualizing non-traditional citation trees that encompass lived experience, artistic practice, and kinship with mentors, collaborators, and co-thinkers. Ultimately, this dialogue invites an expansive view of citation as world-building. Critically, this piece uses Chicago-style footnotes to engage with citational politics in dialogue and form: One of the co-authors engages with the dialogue post-hoc through the footnotes, and we use the footnotes to reveal the writing process and editorial review. Rather than merely naming sources, we reflect on what it means to be in conversation with them—across time, space, and medium. Through this piece, we aim to model a citational practice rooted in relational ethics, joy, complexity, and critique.

Keywords: canon; arts; positionality; anti-colonial; feminist epistemology; Indigenous knowledges

Introduction

This is a conversation among members of Professor Alexandrina Agloro's "co-lab" at Arizona State University (ASU). Much like our co-lab meetings, this conversation is at our collective kitchen table, in the spirit of Dr. Agloro's lineage to San Francisco State University's College of Ethnic Studies, Black radical feminism, and Third World Liberation movements. We modeled this writing after Barbara and Beverly Smith's formative transcribed conversation in *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings of Radical Women of Color* (1981), though in the editorial process we also learned about kitchen table talks as Indigenous research methodologies.[1] We are a collective of PhD students and our common mentor representing four schools and two colleges at ASU, united by a drive for a community of practice for justice-oriented, community-based, and arts-based research in sustainability and science, technology, and society (STS).

This piece was transcribed from a conversation that took place over Zoom in February 2025, which has been edited for clarity and flow. We have also incorporated some additional content using Chicago-style footnotes, and the way we have structured our footnotes is critical to the discussion presented here. First, the footnotes incorporate the voice of co-lab member Lívia Cruz, who was not present for the original discussion. She later reviewed the conversation and added comments as footnotes. This deliberate, partially aesthetic choice ensures Lívia's contributions remain visible while clarifying that her remarks were added retrospectively. We also use the footnotes to engage with editing the paper in two rounds: pre–editorial review and post–editorial review. Pre–editorial review comments are attributed to the person who wrote them while post–editorial footnotes were managed collectively in a collaborative editing session. By structuring our paper this way and using Chicago footnotes, we engage with citational politics both in dialogue and in form.

The conversation begins with an exchange about our individual citational practices and politics, and we explore citation as a practice of community accountability, aesthetic expression, resistance to erasure, and care for knowledge lineages. We then address disciplinary and epistemological borders and conventional academic genealogies, and we share potential alternative genealogies that encourage us to view citation as world-building. Because this dialogue was not scripted, it is not always linear; it is sometimes recursive, as one person takes up an earlier thread in the conversation, reviving a point of interest and making connections to someone else's ideas as the discussion unfolds organically. These callbacks reinforce the lack of closure on the topics discussed here, especially given that this writing is an edited version of our full conversation.

A Conversation on Citation and Politics

To begin our conversation, we first asked each other: What are your citational practices and considerations? How have your citation politics evolved? What has impacted your thinking?

AME. From a practical standpoint, I use Zotero[2] as a citation manager. The reason I use it is that it's open source, so available to people in other countries who I collaborate with. I found that really important as a first step to increasing who has access to the information that we're using in our writing.

As far as practices and considerations, that's actually evolved quite a bit for me. My undergraduate degrees are in ecology and Hispanic studies, which are two completely different fields. But I've been in environmental sciences for a long time, and one of the interesting things is they use APA [American Psychological Association] citation format. I'd never encountered Chicago until a graduate-level humanities class, and the professor, Jenna Hanchey, articulated that Chicago style is more conducive to actually having a dialogue about your relationship with the sources you're citing when you have space for footnotes within the text, when that's normalized (Hanchey 2024).[3] I haven't completely shifted to Chicago, but I'm trying to be more

[1] **Inserted post–editorial review:** *KULA* published a conversation in 2021 between Cree-Métis scholar Jessie Loyer and her father, Darrell, which cites *Disinherited Generations: Our Struggle to Reclaim Treaty Rights for First Nations Women and Their Descendants* by Nellie Carlson, Kathleen Steinhauer, and Linda Goyette as an example of kitchen table talks as research methodology.

[2] **Ame:** I also use the plug-in for Microsoft Word, which makes maintaining citations simple and auto-generates a bibliography.

[3] **Lívia:** I had a similar experience regarding citation format, coming from the biological sciences and ecology fields, in which APA citation is the norm. I feel that, oftentimes, the culture around citations in those fields is that they can be used much more to confirm an argument the author is trying to make than to actively be in conversation with the ideas being conveyed in the literature. Now, as a PhD student in a program that is interdisciplinary—Biology and Society—I'm getting exposed to literature that treats citations differently. It didn't used to be a concern to me before; I mostly had contact with one model. I also heard Professor Jenna Hanchey's teachings about Chicago citation style, but I could only understand what Jenna meant when I read *Pollution Is Colonialism* by Max Liboiron (2021). Liboiron not only emphasizes their citational politics but also offers a very good model of how citational choices, from format to who and why you choose to cite, are impactful. At the level of the reader's experience, I felt that I had a better sense of how Liboiron interacts with the literature, where they were coming from when they chose each scholar, and what agenda they were seeking to advance. It was also a pleasant experience to feel that I was also being explicitly treated as part of the conversation, as the footnotes created dialogue with the readers. In my own writing, I'm still slowly learning to incorporate this conversational approach. I am still using the APA format (especially because most journals in my field require that), but making more extensive use of footnotes when they are accepted and increasingly engaging more intentionally, in text, with the ideas in the works I cite. What is required and/or accepted by journals? Why do they make the choices they make? What is the history behind those choices and the values they underscore?

aware of not just name-dropping people, although that's still the case in a lot of my writing. I try to engage more with specific authors by citing them in full or with multiple sentences calling out their contribution, and by talking about who the person is, like their position, identity, or expertise, such as "an Indigenous writer" or "a scholar in sociology" or "a thought leader." In this way, I try to contextualize who they are and what they're saying in my work, too.

LEAH. I've never had somebody break down to me, from an ethical and political perspective, why we use the different formats of the citations that we use. I came from a cognitive science background and APA was the go-to form. Recently, I was asked to use Chicago-style citations for a paper that I was working on and one of the comments I got from a reviewer was that I don't engage at all with the main text in my footnotes. And I saw that and was like, "Am I supposed to do more in these footnotes than just cite my sources?" This conversation and that reviewer comment—that I literally saw three days ago—is the first time I'm realizing that citational style has an impact on how we engage with the authors that we're citing.

I think this gets at a larger point about citational practices: that we're not really trained in the ethics and politics of those practices. I managed to get to my third year of my PhD—after also working in research before the PhD—and this is the first time I'm encountering this specific citational practice and its impact on engaging more meaningfully with the people that we are writing with.

Just to go back to your point about Zotero as well, I did intentionally make sure that that was an open-source software.

ADRIENE. I've been writing, publishing, and citing for longer than most of you, as my career has expanded from being centered in the arts. Now the writing I'm doing is centered more in sustainability and sustainability science. And so, I made the opposite move from using Chicago or MLA format and being used to being very conversational in footnotes and having the bibliography be something that's relatively . . . smaller.

It's very interesting, the way that in social science frameworks your bibliography is sometimes as long as your paper; it's extremely expansive and it shows your knowledge base. In the arts and some humanities disciplines you might really be working very deeply with just a few texts and that would not be seen as a negative, and the rest of it would be your theorization.[4] So just that issue of "I'm citing this, I'm citing that" in moving into sustainability science, sustainability discourse, and having to back up every one of my ideas is very different. Sometimes I think—Well, wait! These are my ideas. They may also be other people's ideas, but I also came to them. Navigating through that space where I am theorizing things, but there also are other people in dialogue with this. Where do I stop the citation? These are some questions that come up for me.

I do want to say, in terms of how my citation politics have evolved—beyond what structure I use, what citational framework I use—I also come from a feminist background and that informs my ethics. I was very, very influenced early on by bell hooks's strong statement that she made in *Ain't I a Woman* (1981) where she asserts with whom she wants to be in dialogue, and the way that footnotes can interrupt our communication with an audience by making the work appear erudite.[5] I recall reading that when I was a very young undergraduate, and it really shaped and framed my thoughtfulness about how I was citing and when I was citing.

FARAH. I became aware of citational practices in grad school. In my undergraduate studies citation was very mechanical for me, following this style and its rules. I chose whichever one was the simplest, cleanest. For me it was the book *Living a Feminist Life* (2017) by Sara Ahmed that made me aware of the politics of citation. I think that book threads well into what Adriene was saying.

Before this book I attended a literature review workshop from the University Writing Center at ASU, and they talked about identifying your "mentor texts." These are texts that accompany your ideas across your

[4] **Lívia:** Yes!!! I'm glad Adriene brought up this point. I feel that our own theorization in the natural and social sciences is much less valued; it feels that ideas and thoughts need always to be backed up by a citation. In my own experience, it ends up making me feel insecure to freely reflect and theorize more deeply in interaction with one or a handful of papers. The idea that we need to "show our knowledge base," to use Adriene's words, affects how deeply I engage with each of the authors I read. And I feel it ends up putting limits on the kinds of ideas I can write down. If I have no source to refer to, it would not be worth writing down. I recently read the thesis of a friend who studies film and education, and she writes the whole background of her thesis engaging with three or four sources. At no point did I feel her claims were less valid, and I am just now realizing it was probably because of how detailed, granular, and deep her dialogue with those sources was.

[5] **Lívia:** Oh! I love the comment about interruption of the text! I feel that often when I'm reading papers that use footnotes too much, as if they were breaking my line of thought. But, for some reason I still cannot articulate well, I didn't feel that with *Pollution Is Colonialism*. Maybe it was a matter of style that made it feel less erudite, such as with the direct interactions with the reader and the jokes. I also feel that, when reading virtually, I get more annoyed by footnotes than when reading on paper. And, to me, the discussion of how our relationship with text changes when we read on a screen versus touching the paper is one that might also be relevant in terms of how our citation and note-taking practices change. I feel I'm able to connect easier to what I can touch, and feel, and smell and add my handwriting to, and I believe it affects not only what but also *how* I cite different sources.

graduate journey. For example, the Max Liboiron book *Pollution Is Colonialism* could be a mentor text for Ame. For me, Sara Ahmed's book would be a mentor text in shaping my relationship to scholarly citation.

In the book she talks about citations like these bricks that build your scholarship and build your house of ideas or this architectural thing, or even threading where your ideas live. They are like threads so you are building on them. So you're constructing something new, but these texts are your bricks that you are shaping in your new thing.

So I think that's one way that my citation practice evolved. The second is related to my PhD program, which is Global Development Studies. Global development [studies] has a lot of problems because of how it emerged as a field. It came from the attempts of the Western world to understand and then make interventions in the areas of the world that they thought needed help. For example, Western and white ethnographers and anthropologists brought in their extractive methods. This has received critique and changed when scholars from the areas being studied became involved in research. But for me it created a lens and an indicator to look at. Are you, as a researcher, citing the people, the local experts from the place you are researching?[6]

The third way my citation practice has evolved is by looking at my peers who have graduated and their publications. In graduate school you learn with your dissertation committee, but you also learn with your peers, and they all influence our thinking and ideas during our dialogues. My peers are new scholars with emerging publications, so I want to cite them. And for those who do not have publications yet, I do tell them, "Hey, please publish your ideas, I want to cite you!" One of the alumni I am citing in my dissertation is Jathan Sadowski, who graduated years before I entered the department, but whose dissertation, articles, and books I read. I met him at the 4S [Society for Social Studies of Science] Conference in Honolulu, and thanks to me, at least one person besides his committee had read his dissertation. He is no longer engaged in the topic of smart cities as I am, but he expressed gratitude that someone is continuing the work.

These are the bricks that Ahmed mentions make scholarship.

Finally, I am trying to use first names as much as possible given that women's names as authors have been hidden under pen names or abbreviations historically. In Modern Language Association (MLA) and Chicago citation style, first names are used, which is important in cases of people with the same surname and first initial, or when trans or non-binary authors change their first names but the first initial remains the same.

If an author lists their authorial name, I try to follow it as much as possible.

For me, I have two last names, and I like to use both. When I use only Farah Najar, people (even from Mexico, the US, Asia, anywhere) assume I am from the Middle East and want an explanation, which I don't have. When I add Arevalo, which is of Spanish origin, I pass as Latina more easily. But sometimes the citation managers drop my first last name, so when I can, I provide citations as I would like to be cited.

ALEX. I can offer a different perspective, being a little further on in my academic career. From where I stand, status changes things, so being a grad student means you have to prove how well you're grappling with "bodies of literature," how you've "mastered" the knowledge you're supposed to know, and that changes how you're writing. It also changes how many citations you have to use—grad students use so many citations!

But that's because you're trying to still prove how much you know as you're wading through finding your way in the field.

There's a point when you make this transition away from being a graduate student, and either a snarky or kind journal editor or a mentor will tell you, "Hey! You've done it. You got the degree. You don't need to use so many citations. Only use the ones that you actually need to support your point." Citations then become your friends and interlocutors. You no longer have a laundry list as an emotional support

[6] **Lívia:** This question is a huge one for me right now. As a Brazilian who is pursuing a PhD in the US, and doing work focused on the Brazilian Amazon, it has been a struggle for me since I started the program to make the time to read the authors that are bringing perspectives from Latin America, from Brazil and specifically from the Amazon. As the readings in most of the classes I took were centering perspectives from the US, I was not being exposed to the critiques or counter-arguments to all the major theoretical frameworks that came from other worldviews. And, honestly, even before moving to the US, the culture within the natural sciences is so deeply dominated by colonial narratives that, in my undergrad and master's, we would mostly read what was published in English and follow the theories, assumptions, and protocols that were created in accordance to the hegemonic US scientific approach. I came to understand the importance of pluralizing my readings mostly by noticing that the kinds of discussions I had been witnessing on the ground in the Amazon were not being portrayed in the academic publications or in the discussions in classes here in the US. Noticing the lack of those themes, or identifying how they were being approached from a very different perspective, made the connection between place-based approaches/knowledge, lived experiences, values, ontologies, and intellectual production much clearer to me. In my first semester at ASU, I was in a class where we read *Research Is Ceremony* (2008) by Shawn Wilson, and the author calls attention to how we need to be aware of the circular connection between ontologies, axiology, methodology, and epistemologies, which are informing each other in our research praxis. The discussion about citational choices relates to that. I now constantly think about the concept of "pluriversality," and about whose worlds, whose values, I am centering when I am choosing which words to propagate through my citational practices. Which I guess is also a matter of worldmaking (Escobar 2020).

parenthetical before you get to your point. Essentially, the amount of citations you use starts becoming more intentional.

When you reach this stage, you could start choosing whose work you choose to engage.[7] And I think this is when it starts becoming more political. You can choose not to cite men who are jerks and abusers, or cite them with a caveat. Bell hooks did this very well when she wrote about Paulo Freire in *Teaching to Transgress* (1994). In her conversation with herself (bell hooks—the writer and Gloria Watkins—the person), she named the perspective of the "phallocentric paradigm of liberation—wherein freedom and the experience of patriarchal manhood are always linked as though they are one and the same" (1994, 49) that Freire and other male critical thinkers of that time held. Hooks notes that she's always been aware of Freire's sexist language, but that she never wishes that this critique overshadows the capacity to learn from his work.[8]

In one of the fields where I work—game studies—Kishonna Gray created the hashtag #CiteHerWork. This was meant to bring visibility to how infrequently women are cited. Gray tells the origin story of this hashtag, where she was speaking to a journalist about another woman game studies author, Adrienne Shaw. When the article came out, Adrienne Shaw was not mentioned at all, and that was the impetus for Gray to create the hashtag to make sure that women get noticed for their work. Another citation visibility test is the Gray Test—named after Kishonna Gray. It was developed by Wendy Belcher, who is a professor of African literature at Princeton and first proposed it in a 2018 tweet. The format for the Gray Test is that a journal article must not only cite the scholarship of at least two women and two non-white people, but they must also discuss the literature in the body of the text. It doesn't count if it's in a laundry list of citations in a parenthesis.

ADRIENE. I've noticed the same kind of absence or elision in relationship to Indigenous authors. And it has come up in a bunch of the scholarship that I'm reading where time and time again someone will be discussing something related to metaphysical knowledge or embodied knowledge or other types of knowledge, and they'll write, "Of course, ancient people have known this for a long time" but then go on to cite only non-Indigenous authors. At this time, there are contemporary Indigenous authors like Kyle Whyte, Melissa Nelson, and Linda Tuhiwai Smith who are writing about their knowledge systems, and I see it as critical to make sure that I'm citing them—not just referring to these general ideas that cultures have stewarded over time, but citing contemporary authors who are publishing about these systems.

ALEX. This is also a bigger issue of intellectual property that comes up with Indigenous people, particularly in art, about trademarks, styles of art making, styles of knowledge and more, so it's not just an academic problem.

AME. Speaking of honoring Indigenous scholarship, I want to acknowledge the impact of Max Liboiron, their work, their book, and some of the webinars they've been offering on my understanding of citational politics. There's their book, *Pollution Is Colonialism*, where they intentionally state: "These footnotes are a place of nuance and politics, where the protocols of gratitude and recognition play out (sometimes also called citation), . . . and where I contextualize, expand, and emplace work. . . . They are part of doing good relations within a text, through a text" (Liboiron 2021, 1n1). I believe it is also intended for an audience who, like you were saying, Leah, doesn't have that experience with footnotes being a way of forming more personal relationships with text. That was a strategic move.

And there was also a move of marking people's Tribal affiliation. This is again a very political, intentional choice to show if someone is Indigenous or what their affiliation is—like who claims them—or whether that's not indicated.

And that also reminds me of a paper that relates specifically to Indigenous and Native American research. Alexander Soto,[9] A. Brave Heart Sanchez, Jeanette M. Mueller-Alexander, and Joyce Martin wrote a report that was entitled "Researching Native Americans" (2021) specifically on the vocabulary and the search strategies that they were noticing.[10] The researchers observed a trend of other researchers talking about Indigenous knowledges without situating specifically place-based, Tribal nation–based knowledges, and without having a relationship with that place or those people. This relates to what you were saying, Adriene. So what they actually did as part of their search was look to see if any of the authors on any of these works were affiliated either as an Indigenous person or with that place. These layers of what makes something an ethical engagement when it comes to knowledges that are Indigenous or place-based, have different claims.

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[7] **Lívia:** Yes!!! One of the main barriers to freely choosing who I will cite, besides having to read papers that I have to engage with because of classes in grad school, is the need to show that I have read what is considered "canon" in my field. Most of the time, this is not the perspectives from Latin America nor the ones that are the most relevant for me to make sense of the context in which I work.

[8] **Inserted post–editorial review:** An expansion on hooks' stance about Freire was added here.

[9] **Ame:** Alexander Soto (Tohono O'odham) is the Director of the Labriola National American Indian Data Center at ASU Library, which is an amazing cultural center and hub for data sovereignty.

[10] **Ame:** The use of Chicago in-text citations renders invisible people with "et al.," which is something the authors of this paper hadn't thought about as a concern before. Then, the choice of including all names can become a question of "economy" and use of space on a page.

That's something I've been thinking about—I don't think I have an answer to it, but it does relate to how we assess citation.

ADRIENE. I wanted to say something else about that book regarding the way that Liboiron uses the parenthetical of Tribal identification, as well as identifying others (Settlers, for example) and also marking the "unmarked." It's almost like I can't unsee it; I am trying to figure out how to incorporate this into my scholarship, but I don't want to copy them. Liboiron cites the work of Marisa Duarte as a model, and I suppose that is what good scholarship is: a constant evolution of lineages of thought and form.

I'm curious for those of you who have read that book if you have a similar tension, or if you feel like we should just go for it and start to do that. Especially since I'm citing Indigenous authors in my text, and many times the style guides indicate you're meant to indicate Tribal affiliation.

AME. I haven't decided to do it, but I've thought about how to integrate some of my politics into my practice as a praxis, whether it's only citing people from a specific part of the world when I'm talking about that part of the world, or whether it's only citing people who inhabit multiple intersecting systemically oppressed identities when I'm talking about something pertaining to that intersection. I haven't finalized it. But it's definitely led me to question that. And I think what Liboiron is doing is setting that example, saying, You can make those moves. I think I'm calling attention to the distinction between the move itself versus knowing that you can make moves. You can also make a stance and then reflect on it later. It doesn't have to be that same move. But it could be, if it's relevant. And then cite the move. That's their influence.

I touched on it a little bit with the idea of the footnotes and the engagement there, but the other thing I wanted to talk about with Max Liboiron was their workshop "Methods for an Anticolonial Lit Review" (2024). Two of the things that stood out to me that were humorous, but also more about the ethics of how we produce research and produce knowledge, were to "avoid firsting and gap-filling." The concept of "firsting" says, I'm the first to do something or to come up with an idea, or This is the first time this is here, often using words like "pioneering." This is the idea of novelty being a valid marker for good research. Liboiron was basically saying that's something to be more humble about. The other term was "gap-filling," which is, I'm gonna set up an argument specifically to show why there is one thing with which I'm gonna fill this gap. This comment was about uplifting the politic of, We're building on other people's ideas, or they're influencing us, and we have a relationship with these other ideas that we're citing, as opposed to, I am charting new territory or claiming something new, or filling something that's supposedly empty, or capitalizing on this in some way.[11] And I think we feel a lot of pressure to present our work that way. I've noticed that in science, especially. One thing that makes me think of how we're measuring how often things are cited is thinking about what the citations are for. Is it to prove something? As grad students, it feels like we must in some cases cite certain things. But then, also, *what* are we citing? I didn't realize I could cite non-peer-reviewed publications until my PhD. Even in my master's degree, which was an interdisciplinary program, I didn't know I could cite anything non-peer-reviewed except for climate reports at the international level, for example. So, citing conversations, citing dialogues, citing pieces of art that I witnessed, any of those things—that feels . . . political. And also it opens up the space of how we grapple with what citation means across borders of different types of knowledge, but also different geographies and disciplines.

I went to a talk through the Ways of Repair: Loss and Damage forum, and I think Adriene was there, too. Alexis Pauline Gumbs was speaking, and not only did she read one of her essays at that event, but there was a round table where people reflected on culture as a technology of survival (Gumbs 2025). She evoked embodied resonances and repetition and rhythms, and how those transcend time and space, and how it all relates specifically to disaster response and climate. That was really helpful in my grounding of my work with cultural memory and all of the impacts of empire and separating people. Prior to this I probably wouldn't have cited that conversation. I'm finding almost everything she does is constituting one of my mentor texts and I think that's been fundamental for me.

FARAH. Those borders become diluted when integrating our research story. One way to start reflecting is going one step back to ask yourself what led you to want to study that particular group of people? What leads to a white person wanting to study a group of black, Indigenous, or brown people? Something similar can be reflected in relation to the research objects or technological artifacts we are studying. What is my personal, cultural, and emotional connection to this technology?

I have been reflecting on these ideas, because then the answers can take you to more sources of knowledge that go beyond academic citation. Donna Haraway named this "situated knowledge" in plural (1988).

[11] **Lívia:** The gap-filling and the firsting ideas as a justification for someone to develop research makes me think about the *terra nullius* colonial discourse, in terms of how it erases the possibilities that there are people who have been exploring the topic you claim as "untouched land." But they are probably people who you don't know or whose work you cannot access due to language barriers and to time limitations, or who are producing knowledges about that topic that are not in conformity to academic standards. Both Liboiron (2021) and Smith (1999) explore links among academic firsting and "conquering" land.

For me, this means that even if you made a strong attempt to stay within those knowledge borders, we are embodied multidimensional beings existing and experiencing.[12] This informs your research story, from thoughts formed after watching a film, going on a walk, conversations with others, reflecting on your history, sources that do not count in the academic system of citations.

LEAH. This conversation is making me wonder whether positionality statements are part of a . . . citational practice.

Specifically, I wonder how much our positionality makes it more important to cite certain authors. For me, as a white researcher in data sovereignty, I'm really aware that I need to be citing Indigenous Data Sovereignty scholars, even if I'm not necessarily directly studying Indigenous Data Sovereignty . . . anyway, I do think positionality is worth considering in our citational politics.

I'd also like to pick up Farah's thread on the things that inform our research, especially non-academic systems of citation. I've been wondering how much I want to look into self-publication mechanisms. This applies to a zine I made recently and a primer that I produced through a project during the second year of my PhD (Friedman 2025). I feel this itch to get something out there similar to the zine, but the review process takes so long for journals and doesn't always reach the audiences that I'd like to reach. Again, this isn't something I have a clear answer on but I want to understand how these mechanisms of self-publication can be referenced in the world.

Finally, and this is going to the crossing borders conversation: I am getting more and more into thinking about embodied practices for understanding data and the infrastructures we build around data. I am a professional dancer and have a lot of experience facilitating workshops and dance classes, guiding people through the process of accessing their own bodily knowledge. My question is: Where does that fit into my own citational practice? Can I cite my own artistic practice? If so, how do I cite it?

I went to a series of dance workshops this summer at something called b12 in Berlin and I want to pull from some of the knowledge that those dance artists were sharing.[13] I spent two weeks studying with them and want to start pulling it into my workshop facilitation that's more in this academic research realm. Can I cite a workshop that I went to and took meticulous notes at? How do I do that?

ALEX. Yes! Yes, you can cite it. You should cite it.

LEAH. OK, yeah, absolutely! To get at the educational piece though, I don't know what style I use to cite that and I'm not sure I understand who will value that the workshops are being cited. I absolutely think I should cite the workshops and the work of those dance artists should be honored in this way, even if they never see the citations. But will academic journals accept those citations? Which journals should I turn to?

There's also the question of citing dance and movement-based practices that are particularly ephemeral . . .

ADRIENE. This is such an important and interesting and tangled space here. First of all, I would say, yes, definitely cite things like that. And also we're kind of in the beginning of making these rules, as early or continuing scholars. Maybe a next generation of scholars will adopt these practices, and as we begin to do that more and more, the field will have to grapple with that, and presumably will shift and change. I think we have to see ourselves as part of a larger dynamic field.

Right now, there are definitely standards for how to cite "non-scholarly" items, but they don't "count" in the same way. For instance, when people write about my work, when my artwork—my creative research—is cited (there are articles and dissertations and chapters written about my artwork), those citations of my research don't show up in a citational index for me. Even though we can add exhibitions and performances to ORCID profiles now, they show up differently and appear "lesser than" since information regarding the context (like a museum or venue of exhibition) is omitted when exported as a biographical sketch, which is required when submitting a grant. This would be akin to omitting the journal in which an article is published!

It's still nice to have the work written about, and certainly I engage with the writing because it's analytical, and that helps me evolve my creative work. So I would say, yes, cite people's creative research!

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[12] **Lívia:** This made me think about how bell hooks, in *Teaching to Transgress*, argues that no theory that cannot be communicated in a colloquial conversation with non-academics is useful (hooks 1994). And I think in this sense we would be "boundary spanners," or translators among the multiple worlds we inhabit, in order to value the contextual, situated knowledges across borders. I personally don't think we should only cite work that is produced by people from the place where we are working. I think what is helpful and conducive here is to cultivate the consciousness about the origin of the knowledge we are using as reference and to what kinds of onto-epistemologies and axiologies they are rooting from and answering to. It is important to be aware of the caveats that are embedded in translation processes and the power disparities that inhabit the hierarchies among ways of knowing so we don't reinforce them by imposing theories and concepts and words from one place to the other without attending to what is lost and what is brought with translation.

[13] **Leah:** The workshops I would like to cite from b12 were run by Zoe Gyssler and Satoshi Kudo (2024). I also want to acknowledge the work of j.bouy and Miguel Gutierrez, who I have trained with in other settings and have heavily influenced my work. See bibliography for more about these workshops.

Also, to say that creative research is not peer-reviewed is wrong. When you're curated into a show, that's a type of peer review. It's not acknowledged as such, and it doesn't have the same agreed-upon standardized frameworks of peer review that scholarly and scientific research have evolved. But perhaps we need to create some other kinds of accountability structures that include these practices, so that we can understand how that's happening, or make that vetting more transparent, making explicit what being curated into an exhibition means.[14] Of course all venues, like all journals, are not held with the same regard . . .

I would say another thing that's really difficult is that much writing about artwork (not art history, but contemporary writing about artwork) in art journals is not included in academic databases. It's completely disappeared from academic search engines. I just want to make a note of that, since most people don't realize that. So I have to come up with completely different ways of conducting literature reviews when I'm working with artwork because it doesn't show up in the same way. I could do what would be called an exhaustive literature review with the scholarly databases, and it would have tremendous holes in relation to the art I am discussing. This is also the case within the area of Indigenous knowledges. So our citational practices as they evolve are going to become really important to the extent that they're also going to help shape some of these databases. We should probably be working with the librarians to challenge the database vendors to come up with other schema for this.

LEAH. I just want to verbalize what my vigorous nodding was about, which is the perceived lack of peer review in artistic practice. The same thing applies to dance workshops; these are teachers that have worked to build a reputation for doing what they do. They've been curated into this festival, but there's not a peer review process in the same way that there is for an academic journal article.

Sometimes a curator attends a workshop and you just have to trust the decision. Sometimes even the number of Instagram followers can become a metric for reputation in the dance world.[15] I don't necessarily love it but that is sometimes how people build their reputation. So I was just really vigorously relating to the way that peer review happens in dance spaces as you were talking, Adriene.

Being in academia, we're reproducing this idea of an elite few who are calling themselves experts adding to what this level of expertise is. And this raises questions about these ideas of canon, what governs who you're expected to cite, and who you must cite for different reasons. This is about who decides what's valuable knowledge, what's valid knowledge, and what needs to be reproduced.

AME. Leah, I think your example of the Instagram followers is a good one in the sense that "other" people have developed citational metrics. I'm referencing people who are also "othered": people who are not represented in academia, whose knowledges aren't legible and maybe *should not be* legible by the same metrics. That's not the point. And it's not necessarily knowledge *for* academia.

So, related to this idea of canon, I was reading a book called *The Dangerous Art of Text Mining*, and they reference studies about feminist zines from the seventies (Guldi 2023). They look at who the zines cite, such as notable feminist thinkers of different time periods, mapping when different people are influencing the people making the zines. I thought it was really interesting to say that by looking in zines for mentions not only of people's ideas and people themselves you can see a progression over time of who is making up that canon—who's influential in these spheres. And this is a medium that isn't peer reviewed, it's artistic. I was struck by not only it being studied, but also that there's a metric for influence that can maybe serve as a translation mechanism. Or as a rebuttal to those who say, This isn't peer-reviewed and this person doesn't have influence. Yet, here's a way not only to show how this can be valid knowledge, but in what ways it's influencing their community.

ALEX. adrienne maree brown does a really great job with non-hierarchical citation, at least in *Emergent Strategy* (2017). She cites academic books, the visual language of Rihanna's tattoos, Drake lyrics. . . . They're all in the footnotes, and they all get equal weight in the way that they're positioned. I also love this idea of acknowledgements sections in books as a form of citation. Tala Khanmalek talks about building community through acknowledgements (2021). I love, love, love, love, love reading the acknowledgements sections of books because it lays out the relationships and the relationality that was influential to the production of knowledge.[16] Acknowledgement sections are quantifiable by scientometrics scholars, and can show a data

[14] **Inserted post–editorial review:** We became aware of some examples of movements in the direction of being careful with metrics and being more inclusive, such as the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA), which is a collective of organisations committed to reforming the methods and processes by which research, researchers, and research organisations are evaluated.

[15] **Inserted post–editorial review:** Following editor suggestions, I (Leah) looked into "institutional altmetrics" and discovered that there are companies like Altmetric that intentionally look into the broader impact of academic work via social media sites. So it seems like Instagram mentions and citations are gaining popularity as a valid metric of impact! Although it's not quite the same as the reputation of an individual dancer that is measured by likes or follows, altmetrics are an increasingly relevant discussion.

[16] **Lívia:** OMG I love that!!!! I used to skip the acknowledgements sections of books, but I started reading them carefully and creating mental images of the relationships among the people mentioned and the author, as well as of the process of production of the book. And maybe I just realized it, but my relationship with acknowledgements sections changed after taking Alex's class in 2023, when I learned to pay closer attention to the methodological choices in books (Agloro 2019). I think that made me start to understand the

source of scholarly relationships much like co-authorship and citation (Kusumegi and Sano 2022).[17] I also really love when people use their keynote talks to give shine to other people's work. I think of digital humanities scholar Jentery Sayers,[18] and he is so generous. He's a white man, and he's thoughtful about how he strategically showcases women, people of color, and junior scholars when he gives lectures.

I will wrap up with this: When we think about The Canon, I think about academic genealogy. There's something to be said that we're having this conversation, and in a very real way, you are all my students, which means you're being trained by me in certain ways.[19] This also means that you, as my students, are part of a longer intellectual genealogy, and it connects you to the people who are deeply influential to me who taught me so much about whole personhood, and how to cultivate graduate students in warm yet rigorous ways.

FARAH.[20] Seems to me that we're getting into the "hows" of what we can change. Because in academia we have to talk about filling the research or knowledge gap. We have to do this in order to get grants, fellowships, and demonstrate we know our field as graduate students. There's a performative demonstration of following the rules first, citing canon, and then showing why our work can be innovative and worthy of being funded.[21]

When Alex referenced genealogy, academic genealogy, what came to mind to me is not mentor texts but rather "mother" or even "grandmother" texts if we want to use the gestation and family tree metaphor. I guess we can include both canon texts and also "grandmother texts," which are required prior to getting into our "mother texts," and we can add new members to our family tree or our beautiful tree of knowledge, for example. However, I do not know how these conventional and unconventional family trees could be shown visually. I guess on Google Scholar you can manually add non-academic publications to your page? Or it might take building a website to visually show and therefore cite what's not counted on conventional citational indexes.

Closing Comments

We take a thematic pivot here into some post-conversation closing comments. In an effort to keep our writing decisions in front of the curtain, we are adding these closing comments on the suggestion of *KULA* editors. In the process of editorial review, we encountered exciting tools pointed out by the editors that address some of the citational issues we brought up; however, these new tools brought up additional tensions as to why we, as authors, had not previously encountered these tools. There are structural and systemic reasons that we reproduce certain citational practices, such as pressure to cite certain academics as students, dominance of Western languages being cited, and extensive fees required to publish a paper as an open-access article. Less nefarious reasons perhaps include making citational choices based on familiarity: scholarship read in classes or suggested by mentors and peers, which again perpetuates disproportionately citing people who are already in academia.

The tools that are available to cite artistic practice, like ORCID, are still insufficient. Citation formats and options continue to be compressed and erased when other tools like automatic CV builders are forced upon faculty for promotion and tenure reviews and have limited options to list works that make us "productive."

In addition to these tensions, there are many more directions that this conversation can take. As members of a co-lab, each of us has a specific direction we're hoping to keep digging into as far as citation practices and politics.

Ame and Leah are interested in conversations about censorship and compromises made for/in public scholarship. Ame has suggested creating a structure or guidelines for presenting work publicly in these times; they ask: Am I trying to make my work legible? Where am I looking for funding? Who am I collaborating with? How do we navigate this and where are we willing to negotiate on these things? In a similar vein, Leah is especially interested in compromises we make when we search for funding and how we navigate legibility in citational practices when we work in less radical spaces.

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work that is put into that and how it by no means can be done in isolation. Yes! Acknowledgements as citations and testimonies of community building.

[17] **Inserted post–editorial review:** In response to editorial feedback, we added the sentence "Acknowledgement sections are quantifiable by scientometrics scholars, and can show a data source of scholarly relationships much like co-authorship and citation (Kusumegi and Sano 2022)."

[18] **Alex:** See Jentery's website in the bibliography.

[19] **Lívia:** I swear I wrote the previous footnote before reading Alex's ideas about genealogy, and I think it just exemplifies how real it is.

[20] **Farah:** I imagine my mentor texts, such as Ahmed's book, as a family tree—but also other elements that are not counted in citation indexes, such as two influential films, *Sleep Dealer* (2008) and *Elysium* (2013), as tree fruits and branches. Both the *Sleep Dealer* film poster as well as Alex's book chapter on the movie are on her tree (Rivera 2008; Agloro 2019).

[21] **Lívia:** This point about needing to fulfill the expectations of a judging committee for a grant first and then bring the work of authors that are not necessarily canonized because they inhabit the margins or because they are new to the field is definitely one of the strong forces pushing back the choice of citing only local authors, for instance. Feeling the pressure of needing to cite people that are broadly known to help prove the point that I've read the literature. I keep thinking about how it reinforces the disparity in visibility that already favors authors with more access to publication platforms —be that because they have English as their first language or because they can access funds to pay for publication fees or are affiliated with institutions that have agreements with publishers.

Adriene and Farah both question the impact of AI in academic citations. Farah is especially following the public conversation on AI: She is observing the ongoing adoption of generative AI as a tool adopted by some scholars to write academic publications. What matters for Farah, and the rest of our co-lab members, in relation to canon and citation politics is that AI tools are designed to deliver what they are prompted to and in that process they generate text that can have no validity. The cases of fake references and citations have already made news, with journals retracting publications and developing their own AI policies. Hallucinated references create the appearance of citing, and AI tools are trained on the data they were fed with, which is the content available online. They reproduce the appearance of what and who sounds citable based on this training.

As we reflect on the process of having, transcribing, and editing this conversation, we also reflect on our own choices of who we reference in this piece. The citations presented in this conversation were a mix of ones that naturally came to mind when talking to each other and ones that we inserted in the editing process. We were pleasantly surprised that many of the authors we cite are women of color across different phases of their careers, some of whom are not writing from within academic positions.

That said, Lívia especially reflects on the lack of Brazilian, and Latin American more broadly, authors she cites in her footnotes. In this direction, Lívia asks: What are the practices we should attend to, and collectively make a case for, to challenge the dominance of references from the Global North? How do we make space, in graduate programs with students coming from all over the world, for perspectives that are as multiple as the ones the students are bringing? How do we avoid drowning under North American academic work and create space to consolidate knowledge of and build on the literature that comes from our people? How do we pluralize our sources of intellectual work, as an established practice beyond individual labor?

The observation made by Lívia is shared by Farah, who is from Mexico and relies on scholars of science and technology studies from the North or Latin American scholars whose scholarship takes place because of the universities, primarily situated in the Global North, they are in. Further, Ame, who works in South Korea, notices the supremacy of Western languages and the erasure of East Asian scholarship unless it is translated.

In the spirit of creating alternatives that bring answers to the questions we left open, we will continue having conversations—as a lab both publicly and privately—about censorship, compromise, AI, pluralizing geopolitical perspectives in citations, and more.

Competing Interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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